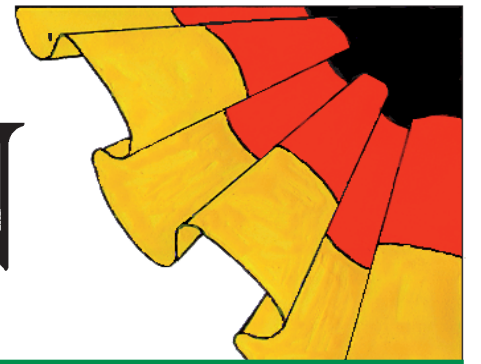


THE CITIZEN

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The 6th Area Support Group Newspaper

March 23, 2004



Stuttgart, Bad Aibling, Oberammergau and Garmisch, Germany



photo courtesy 554th MP Co.

‘Wardawgs’ return *MP platoon comes home after months in Iraq*

By Melanie Casey

Twenty-two members of 3rd Platoon, 554th Military Police Battalion (affectionately known as the “Wardawgs”) returned home March 2 after an 11-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

During the deployment, the platoon was attached to the 173rd Airborne Brigade out of Vicenza, Italy. The troops primarily provided security, processed prisoners of war and protected VIPs (including the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and visiting celebrities), said 1st Lt. Austin Akers, platoon leader.

Training, discipline, luck

Capt. Mirko L. Crnkovich, former commander of the 554th, said the Soldiers’ service while deployed was exemplary.

“[They] captured many of the [high value targets] on the 55 most wanted list. They have been responsible for approximately \$80 million in confiscated funds and gold bullion ... and untold numbers of rifles and grenade launchers, mortars and ammunition,” Crnkovich said.

While accomplishing these objectives, the 554th contingent was the only platoon-sized unit or larger throughout the battalion-sized task force not to suffer a casualty during service downrange.

“They have passed the one true test of a warrior leader,” Crnkovich said. “They have led their troops into the lion’s den and they are coming away unscathed.”

They also brought home four Bronze Stars, three Army Achievement Medals, 17 Army Commendation Medals and one Army Commendation Medal With Valor.

U.S. European Command Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. John B. Sylvester, who addressed the troops during a welcome home ceremony March 10 on Panzer Kaserne, said their performance was proof of their preparation – as well as something extra.

“You didn’t take any casualties [during the deployment]. You know why: training, standards and discipline,” Sylvester said. “And you got lucky.”

[Left] Staff Sgt. Chad Tripp receives a welcome-home hug in the early hours of March 2 on Panzer Kaserne.



Terri Alejandro

Sgt. Richard M. Coates receives an Army Commendation Medal for his service in Iraq from 554th MP Co. Commander Capt. Anthony Tangeman.

‘They have passed the one true test of a warrior leader. They have led their troops into the lion’s den and they are coming away unscathed.’

Capt. Mirko Crnkovich
Former commander, 554th MP Co.

Sylvester also observed that the troops’ time in Iraq had changed them. “You’re better men and women than when you left here,” he said.

First combat experience

The deployment to Iraq was the first combat experience for all of the Soldiers involved, Akers said.

The troops spent most of their time in Kirkuk (in northern Iraq), he said.

They first lived in a bombed-out building and went eight months with no electricity. In the beginning, they also had little contact with their families.

See **Wardawgs** Page 14

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Stuttgart Soldiers serve in Sahara

A contingent of Stuttgart-based special forces Soldiers train African troops in support of the global war on terrorism.



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6th ASG support troops take to the field

Troops from the 6th ASG’s Headquarters, Headquarters Company, sharpen their force protection skills at the MOUT.



Thorns 'n Roses

From community submissions

Roses to:

All the volunteers who participated in the recent hair cut-a-thon and donated their hair to help cancer victims.

Also a special rose to **Carmen Frank**, who did the cutting.

The students, school nurses, art teachers and classroom teachers at **Robinson Barracks, Böblingen and Patch Elementary schools** who made "table tents" for Stuttgart-area dining facilities in observance of National Nutrition Month. You did a super job in reminding the community to "Eat Smart, Stay Healthy!"

Thorns to:

Area sports team coaches who forget that although winning is always nice, the purpose of youth sports should be for every child to learn and have a fair chance to compete.

AAFES, for promoting a recent movie as having a "PG" rating when in fact it had an "R" rating.

It's important for a parent to know the correct rating *before* bringing a 10-year old to the movie and then having to leave because the film is for adults only.

E-mail comments to citizen@6asg.army.mil or fax them to 421-2570/civ. 0711-729-2570.

PRODUCTION NOTE

The article on Patch High School wrestler Josh Anderson that was scheduled to appear in this paper will instead appear in our April 6 edition.

THE CITIZEN

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www.stuttgart.army.mil

Women's History Month more than one-gender celebration

By Paul Stone

American Forces Press Service

Throughout the military this month, the accomplishments of women will be recognized at luncheons, dinners, recognition ceremonies and a host of other events.

March is Women's History Month – traditionally a time to reaffirm women's contributions to our nation and their integral role in our history.

But in a society that designates weeks and months to recognize everything from macaroni to yogurt producers, the significance of these designations can easily get neglected or lost.

A celebration of life

Such should not be the case with Women's History Month. For this is more than a time to recognize women and reflect on their accomplishments: It is a celebration of life.

As little as a generation ago, the teaching of women's role in history was almost nonexistent, give or take a few token profiles of more famous women.

Today, women have moved from the footnotes to the forefront of history.

Women's history courses and programs are abundant with accounts that deepen our understanding of history, expand our minds and tug at our hearts.

Indeed, they have expanded what we now view as "history" to include hearth,

Perhaps no other movement in our history has so fundamentally altered the way we think, work and behave.

home and workplace, as well as government and politics.

A push for change

The women's movement sputtered and sputtered for more than 100 years, occasionally making major gains, such as the right to vote in 1919.

Meanwhile, below the surface, social, political and economic changes were occurring that neither world events nor discrimination could deter.

And in the 1960s, what we now know as the modern women's rights movement was born – a movement that forever changed who we are as a society and a nation.

Without this modern and determined push for equality, Women's History Month might not exist.

And without it many of the choices and opportunities available today might not exist.

Opportunities for all

But women aren't the only ones who have reaped benefits from the movement. Men, too, have experienced increased choices and opportunities.

As stereotypes faded, men have been able to take on jobs traditionally held by women without societal scorn or ridicule, to include assuming the role of primary nurturer by remaining in the home.

Perhaps no other movement in our history has so fundamentally altered the way we think, work and behave, and how men and women view each other.

However, the path leading to these positive changes has been filled with many potholes.

Some changes, such as increased economic equality, have been hard fought. Others, such as increasing movement by women into the full-time labor force, were more gradual. But none should be taken for granted.

Decades of hard-fought change have led us to the point where such a celebration can even occur. It should be embraced to its fullest, and it should be nurtured so future generations will know we helped make a difference.

For more about Women's History Month see page 15.

ON THE STREET

Who is history's most influential woman?

– Compiled by Janna Warburg and Mildred Green



James Bryant
(Civilian)

Eleanor Roosevelt, who had a profound impact and opened the door for many important women today.



Marla Mann
(Civilian)

Susan B. Anthony, who worked for women's rights including voting and the ownership of property.



Spc. Gerald Visconti
(Army)

My mom, because she had unconditional love and raised me to be a morally sound individual.



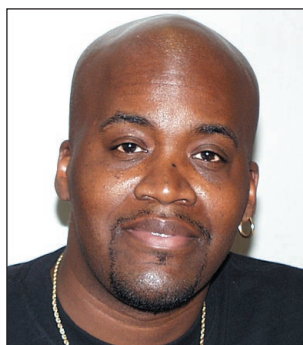
Luisa Hamels
(Civilian)

Eleanor Roosevelt – even though she was a president's wife, she was independent.



Veronica Worhane
(Civilian)

Mother Teresa – she was the type of person I think God wants us to be.



Keith Tull
(Civilian)

Oprah Winfrey, because her work with her charities makes her very special.



Kim Rose
(Civilian)

Florence Nightingale, because she was the founder of nursing.



Col. Mike Boatner
(Army)

Margaret Thatcher, because she helped Ronald Reagan win the Cold War.



courtesy IMA-E

Bob Rainbolt, center, receives a special merit award Feb. 27 in Heidelberg. With him to accept the award are (from left) 6th Area Support Group Command Sgt. Major Daniel Chavez; U.S. Army, Europe, and 7th Army Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. William Ward; 6th ASG Commander Gwendolyn Bonéy-Harris; and Installation Management Agency Europe Region Deputy Director Col. Douglas Earle.

6th ASG earns 'most improved' award for 2003 CFC-O effort

Area contributions increased 30% from 2002

Installation Management Agency
Europe Region Release

The 6th Area Support Group was honored as the most improved community in Europe during the annual Combined Federal Campaign Overseas Awards Ceremony and Luncheon Feb. 27 in Heidelberg.

The event recognized the contributions of 300 Army units in Europe for giving more than \$2.33 million.

Lt. Gen. William E. Ward, deputy commander and chief of staff, U.S. Army, Europe, and 7th Army; and Colonel E. Douglas Earle, deputy director, Installation Management Agency Europe Region, presented the awards to organizations and units that met or exceeded criteria.

Participation, totals increase

The 6th ASG was recognized with a Special Merit Award as the community showing the most improvement in 2003.

Donors within the 6th ASG (including the U.S. military communities of Stuttgart, Garmisch, Bad Aibling and Oberammergau) contributed \$121,704 during the three-month campaign.

The area also boasted a 47.3-percent participation rate, with an average gift of nearly \$156.

These contributions signaled a significant increase over 2002 totals of \$93,870 donated and a 37.4-percent participation rate. "People opened their hearts," said Bob Rainbolt, the 6th ASG's CFC-O project officer and administrator.

The Stuttgart-based Headquarters, U.S. European Command – which conducted a fundraising campaign separate from the 6th ASG's effort – raised \$346,000, with an average gift of \$280.

6th ASG donors contributed \$121,704. The area boasted a 47.3-percent participation rate, with an average gift of nearly \$156.

Strong community support

Forty percent of potential donors in Army, Europe, contributed during the 2003 campaign, which ran from Oct. 1 to Dec. 31. The average gift in 2003 was \$123, an \$22 increase over the previous year's average.

Though deployments in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom reduced the donor pool by nearly 33 percent, total contributions were reduced only by about 15 percent.

About CFC

A not-for-profit organization dedicated to raising funds to support humanitarian programs around the world, the CFC is the only authorized solicitation of all federal employees on behalf of more than 1,400 charitable organizations.

The CFC's goal is to give every service member and civilian federal employee the opportunity to donate.

For more information about the Combined Federal Campaign Overseas visit www.cfcoverseas.org.

News & Notes

Spring Cleanup news, contest

• **Spring Cleanup** is scheduled to begin April 20 at noon in administrative buildings and April 22 at noon in housing areas and dormitories. The focus for this year's campaign is fire prevention.

Prepare now by initiating work requests, identifying safety issues, reporting repair requirements and designating oversized and hazardous materials for removal.

Waiting until the week of cleanup to take actions could overburden the support system.

For more information call one of the following numbers:

□ Patch Barracks – 430-5450/civ. 0711-680-5450

□ Kelley Barracks – 421-2345/civ. 0711-729-2345

□ Panzer Kaserne – 431-2683/civ. 07031-15-683

□ Robinson Barracks – 420-6033/civ. 0711-819-6033

• **A Spring Cleanup art contest** is open to 6th ASG youth ages 4 to 18. To participate, design a poster (maximum size: 24 inches by 18 inches) that reflects the theme "respect our environment and ourselves by not littering – especially with cigarette butts."

Posters may be turned in on Patch Barracks (building 2316, room 2) until April 15.

For more information call 421-2345/civ. 0711-729-2345.

Patch Frame Shop hours change

The Patch Frame Shop will change its operating hours effective March 25. New hours will be Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Thursdays, noon to 7 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The shop will be closed Sundays, Mondays and U.S. holidays.

PWOC holds Spring Rally

The Protestant Women of the Chapel Spring Rally is March 31, 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., in the Swabian Special Events Center.

Enjoy an Italian buffet lunch while learning how to "Abide in the Vine" physically, mentally and spiritually.

For reservations call 07159-933-128 or e-mail saragnon101@aol.com.

Kindermusik class for babies

Give your children the gift that lasts a lifetime by registering them for Kindermusik. Classes for newborn to 18 months will be held Wednesdays, 9:30 to 10:15 a.m., beginning March 24 in Patch Youth Services.

To register call the Patch YS at 0711-680-5378.

SNAP ensures safer community

The 6th Area Support Group's Safe Neighborhood Awareness Program is seeking volunteers to help ensure a safe community.

Participants will be trained to patrol their neighborhoods and report suspicious activity to local military police officials.

Earn great gift certificates and USO trips by just volunteering to walk around your neighborhood. For more information call 421-4615/civ. 0711-729-4615.

Free motorcycle training

The 6th ASG Safety Office, in coordination with the German Automobile Club, is offering one-day motorcycle safety courses April 21 and 29 and May 6, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the ADAC training site near Leonberg.

Participants must use their privately owned motorcycle, have a valid USAREUR motorcycle license and possess elementary riding skills.

Commanders and civilian supervisors are asked to submit names of personnel who need this training via e-mail to dreizlerh@6asg.army.mil or by fax to 421-2643/civ. 0711-729-2643. The deadline for submissions is April 5.

Training requests should include name, rank, phone number, e-mail address and preferred course date.

Volleyball season starts soon

The unit-level volleyball season begins April 6 in the Kelley Fitness Center.

For details call 430-4512/civ. 0711-680-4512.

'Fit For Life' extends enrollment period

Did you miss the initial Fit for Life enrollment in January? It's not too late to join the fun and competition.

Fit for Life runs until mid-December, so there's still plenty of time to rack up the miles and earn incentive awards.

Application are available at all area fitness centers. For an electronic version e-mail doubekc@6asg.army.mil.

Celebrate Women's History Month

Celebrate Women's History Month with a special observance and luncheon
March 26, 11:30 a.m., in the Patch Barracks Community Club.

This year's theme is "Women Inspiring Hope and Possibility."

Guest speaker is **Lt. Col. Kimberly Graham**
of Defense Information Systems Agency, Europe.

There is no charge to attend the event and hear Lt. Col. Graham; however, a buffet lunch will be available for \$6.50.

For more information call 421-2649/civ. 0711-729-2649.



Stuttgart-based SF Soldiers serve in Sahara

By 1st Lt. Phillip Ulmer
435th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

A contingent of Stuttgart-based Soldiers from Special Operations Command, Europe, are training African troops along the outer reaches of the Sahara Desert in support of the continuing global war on terrorism.

The local Soldiers, from the 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), are deployed to Bamako, Gao and Timbuktu, Mali; and Atar, Mauritania, to provide internal defense training for the Pan Sahel Initiative, a U.S. Department of State security assistance program focusing on countries in the African Sahara region.

The PSI supports U.S. national security interests in the war on terrorism by enhancing regional peace and security.

The initiative helps the countries to protect their borders and takes advantage of opportunities to detect and deter terrorists.

Two-way training

"We're training basic platoon-level tasks to one company of the 33rd Parachute Infantry Regiment in Bamako in order to enhance their capabilities to police their border regions in the north," said the commander of the 1/10th SFG(A) operational detachment in Bamako. "They're really a sharp unit and they're picking it up quickly."

Key components of the training include marksmanship, planning, communications, land navigation, patrolling and medical care.

The training is a "two-way street," said 1/



Staff Sgt. Edward Braly

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), stationed on Panzer Kaserne teach mounted infantry tactics to Malian Soldiers in Timbuktu.

10th SFG(A) battalion commander, Lt. Col. Robert Warburg. "While we're here to train the Malian soldiers, we're also receiving tremendous training from them."

The commander of the Malian Army's 5th Military Region, based in Timbuktu, also appreciated the value of the training.

"We're fighting against terrorists, so this training is very important for us," said Malian Army Lt. Col. Unisa Barizamega. "This training is helping us improve our combat skills and is teaching us new ones."

The African soldiers are not the only ones to benefit from PSI.

Unique opportunities

The SOCEUR forces, who pride themselves on their abilities to excel in the most austere locations within the command's area of responsibility, are getting the opportunity to learn new cultures, terrain and languages by working with these African forces.

Also, they are conducting special operations training requirements in terrain that they don't normally encounter in central Europe.

"One of the highlights of our training was our joint airborne operation with the Mauritanian 1st Battalion Commando Para-

"This training is very important for us. [It] is helping us improve our combat skills and is teaching us new ones."

Lt. Col. Unisa Barizamega
Malian Army

chutists using their aircraft and their airspace," said the commander of the 1/10th SFG(A) operational detachment at Atar, Mauritania. "The soldiers are very motivated and they have a good attitude."

"This is a good program and we're glad to be a part of it," said the commander of 1/10th SFG(A) area operating base in Gao, which serves as the headquarters for the PSI mission. "The guys in the unit are working hard and doing a great job," he added.

According to State Department officials, this region of Africa has become important in the global security arena. Vast expanses of unpopulated areas, instability, and porous borders make Africa inviting for terrorists.

"By cooperating with Mali to better protect its borders and territory, we can help keep it from being used by terrorists. This makes Mali a very important partner in the war on terrorism," said Vicki Huddleston, U.S. ambassador to Mali.

Marshall Center to partner with Defense Department for counterterrorism class

George C. Marshall Center
Public Affairs Office

The assistant secretary of defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict and the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies have formed a partnership to develop and conduct a five-week terrorism course under the Department's Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellowship Program.

SO/LIC will provide initial funding to develop the program and the Marshall Center and SO/LIC will

The program seeks to create a community of counterterrorism experts and practitioners.

jointly fund the participation of up to 50 participants in the first course.

'Intellectual interoperability'

The course, titled "Program on Terrorism and Security Studies," will begin in June.

Participants from Europe, Eurasia, Central Asia and selected Mediterranean nations will attend.

The course will help integrate the counterterrorism community and enable individual nations to successfully cooperate in the global war on terrorism.

It will identify and instruct current and future national security officials working in counterterrorist programs, and will help them appreciate both the nature and magnitude of today's threat.

Students will improve their ability to counter terrorism's regional implications by developing common grounds of knowledge, understanding and contacts.

The class will provide an "intellectual interoperability," that will transcend national borders and enable national security officials to cooperate at an international level to contain this threat.

History of terrorism

Course participants will accomplish the following objectives:

- Understanding the history, trends and definitional debate of the term "terrorism."
- Recognizing the legal procedures used to prosecute terrorists.
- Appreciating the methods of severing terrorism's finances.
- Comprehending the synergies of cooperative strategies to contain nations.
- Envisioning the concept of homeland security and how it can apply in a region's nations.

Expert instruction

The course will be led by retired Col. Nick Pratt, the College of Security Studies' professor of Strategy and International Politics.

Pratt has taught terrorism-related courses at the Marshall Center for seven years and brings a wealth of expertise to his role.

"The global war on terrorism is not for linear thinkers," Pratt said. "True, all successful campaigns to eliminate terrorism have begun by eliminating terrorists; however, we must diminish the underlying causes that spawn terrorism by energizing the international community to strengthen weak states."

The program seeks to create a community of counterterrorism experts and practitioners who share common language and values and who will strive to defeat terrorism in all its forms.

For more information contact Kim Walz at 08821-750882, e-mail [walzk@marshallcenter.org](mailto:walz@marshallcenter.org) or visit www.marshallcenter.org.



courtesy Marshall Center

Representatives from the United States were among the 160 participants attending the Central Asian Security conference in Uzbekistan.

Delegates discuss regional security in Uzbekistan

By Charles E. Taylor

George C. Marshall Center

Its 137-kilometer border with Afghanistan places Uzbekistan on the front line in the war against terrorism, which explains why its capital, Tashkent, was the location for a recent conference on regional security in Central Asia.

The four-day conference was organized by the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in cooperation with United States Central Command and the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies.

Global forum

More than 100 participants from defense and security ministries and non-governmental organizations assembled for a series of presentations and discussions on security including border security and illegal trafficking.

Participants came from Armenia, Azerbaijan, China, Georgia, Germany, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the United States.

Regional security

The conference served multiple purposes:

- To build stronger regional cooperation
- To promote security cooperation
- To strengthen counter terrorism measures
- To enhance meaningful relationships among the nations of North America, Europe and Central Asia

Ambassador Mary Ann Peters, Marshall Center associate director for international liaison, opened the conference and led a number of discussions.

Peters said the dialogue pro-

The Marshall Center helps nations develop a unified front in the fight against terrorism, drugs and human trafficking.

moted by this and other Marshall Center-sponsored gatherings helps nations develop a unified front in the fight against terrorism, drugs and human trafficking.

The Silk Road

The Central Asian countries that were the focus of this conference are aligned along the historic Silk Road, which stretches from China to Eastern Europe.

The Silk Road was a vast network of trade routes whose flow of ideas, culture, music and art crossed the mountains and deserts of Central Asia to connect East Asia and the Mediterranean.

Today, most of the Central Asian countries are plagued with political and economic instability, which makes many of them a refuge for terrorist and other illegal activity.

Conference organizers hoped the gathering in Tashkent would help participants gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for this region's mix of people, culture and nations.

For more information about the Marshall Center visit www.marshallcenter.org.

6th ASG Soldiers take it to the MOUT

HHC Soldiers 'train as they fight' with realistic force protection exercise

Story & photos by Melanie Casey

March 4 wasn't a typical work day for about 25 Soldiers assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 6th Area Support Group.

Instead, it was a day to don Nuclear, Biological and Chemical protection gear and participate in a simulated terrorist attack at the Military Operations, Urban Terrain, site near Panzer Kaserne.

The intent of the exercise was to "train and familiarize guard force personnel in the basic initial response procedures required to react to a terrorist chemical attack on an ASG installation," according to the Installation Guard Force training concept for the mission.

"By holding tough, realistic training, our Soldiers are better prepared in case of a terrorist incident," said HHC Commander Capt. Graham Fishburn.

First responders

Because HHC Soldiers may be called upon to provide force protection duties, they could be "among the first to recognize that something's going on and alert the military police, fire department and host nation officials in the event of a terrorist attack," said 6th ASG Chemical Operations Noncommissioned Officer Master Sgt. Gregory Heltz.

The Soldiers underwent refresher training prior to the exercise, during which they reviewed how to don NBC masks and suits, use chemical detection kits and decontaminate themselves quickly and efficiently in the event of a chemical attack.

They also learned how to evaluate medical injuries and evacuate victims.

The Soldiers applied their refresher training in a "hands-on" environment March 4 at the MOUT. "Today we put the pieces of the puzzle together," Heltz said.

Put to the test

The lessons reinforced early in the day were put to the test with the real-time exercise, which began when Pvt. Ondon Sampson, acting as the day's 'terrorist,' detonated a 'chemical weapon of mass destruction' (for this exercise, a smoke bomb).

After an alert was issued from one of the guard patrols, the Soldiers quickly put on their NBC gear and tested the air for toxic chemicals. In order to simulate a real attack, the test kits came back positive for a blood agent (as a reaction to ingredients in the smoke bombs that had been detonated).

Military police troops from the 6th ASG Provost Marshal's Office then stormed and cleared the buildings. They were followed by evacuation teams made up of HHC Soldiers.

The teams first checked for victims and called in casualties. They then began their medical assessments and evacuations.

"We train as we fight," said 6th ASG Command Sgt. Major Daniel Chavez, who was on hand for the exercise.

"There's an added value to real-



HHC, 6th ASG Soldier Sgt. Antonio Henderson evacuates a young "victim" of the mock terrorist attack held March 4 at the MOUT.

istic training, because this is how we'll go to war. We want our ASG Soldiers to be trained how to react. All Soldiers are warriors. This realistic training reinforces that," Chavez said.

"Being prepared to respond and being an asset to the community – to help protect and assist in an emergency situation – is an important thing for our Soldiers to be able to do," Fishburn said.



Military police from the 6th ASG Provost Marshal's Office prepare to "storm and clear" a building during the March 4 exercise.



6th ASG HHC Soldiers don their NBC gear in response to a simulated chemical attack.

Sgt. 1st Class Richard Easter said the training reinforces both the everyday responsibilities of being a Soldier and the necessity of remaining ready to respond to all contingencies.

"It is our responsibility to prevent a terrorist attacks against American interests, but we must also prepare ourselves for the worst and train to react in case an incident does occur," Easter said.

Stuttgart class teaches ‘first aid for suicide’

Armywide *ASIST* effort enhances lifesaving skills

By Melanie Casey

How would you react if someone close to you was having a heart attack and needed cardiopulmonary resuscitation? If you had taken CPR training, would you respond?

What if that same person seemed so depressed that you were worried he or she might be considering suicide? Would you have the confidence to approach that person and ask questions – sometimes difficult and personal questions – in order to get that person help and potentially save his or her life?

Just as CPR-trained individuals can be the first responders in a medical crisis, those who have undergone Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training can be first responders for individuals contemplating suicide.

Participants in an ASIST workshop held March 9 and 10 in the Stuttgart Wellness Center spent two intensive days exploring their attitudes toward suicide, learning to identify suicidal behaviors and discovering how to intervene effectively with a suicidal individual.

Representatives from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines – as well as local nationals, civilian employees and contractors – attended the training, which was sponsored by the 6th ASG Chaplain's Office.

Suicide first aid

ASIST “trains participants to be able to recognize symptoms and perform brief suicide first aid interventions that they can take

anywhere they go,” said Robyn Cryer, Family Advocacy Program educator and ASIST instructor.

The ASIST program is the Department of the Army's suicide intervention program of choice, said Michelle Saylor, 6th ASG health promotion coordinator.

Saylor said 6th ASG Commander Col. Gwendolyn Bonéy-Harris has been instrumental in implementing the program locally.

“[The commander] takes this very seriously,” Saylor said. “It's her job to take care of the tenants in her community.”

Suicide in the military

Between 1980 and 2002, there were more suicides in the military than there were deaths from hostile action, terrorist attacks, homicide or undetermined causes combined.

Nearly 5,000 U.S. service members committed suicide during that time, according to Pentagon statistics.

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the annual number of suicides committed by active-duty Soldiers has increased.

In 2001, the average number of suicides per 100,000 Soldiers was 9.1; by 2003 this number had risen to 12.8.

“We know that the stress level of our Soldiers has increased since Sept. 11,” Lt. Col. Jerry Swanner, Army suicide prevention manager, told Army News Service.

“Therefore, programs that were being considered now have been implemented and fully

It was a wonderful course with passionate mentors who guided the group to discover answers from within.

Capt. Richard Bower
Stuttgart ASIST participant

funded,” Swanner said.

In 2003, 75 active-duty Soldiers – 24 of whom were between the ages of 21 and 25 – took their own lives, according to Army statistics provided by Swanner. Ninety-five percent of these individuals were men.

In 2002, the Air Force had a suicide rate of 8.3 per 100,000. In 2003, its rate was 10.2, according to Gary Pomeroy, chief of Internal Communications and Community Outreach for the Air Force Surgeon General Congressional and Public Affairs.

However, Pomeroy said, 11 active-duty airmen have committed suicide since Jan. 1, putting the Air Force's suicide rate at the 18.1 for the first two months of 2004.

In 2003, the Marine Corps suicide percentage rate was 13.2, compared to 12.6 in 2002, according to statistics provided by Bryan Driver from Headquarters, Marine Corps Plans, Policy and Analysis, Personal and Family Readiness Division.

Five to 25 percent of all suicides in the military go unreported, Saylor said, and non-fatal suicidal behaviors are 40-to-100 percent greater than the actual number of suicides.

Army statistics show that nearly 20,000 active-duty service members had thoughts of suicide in 2003. These are the people that ASIST-trained community members are there to help, Cryer said.

Downrange statistics

There have been 21 documented suicides committed by service members (19 Army Soldiers and 2 Marines) serving in Iraq, Dr. William Winkenwerder, assistant secretary of defense for Health Affairs, said in an interview with CBS News.

Up to 400 more service members have been medically evacuated from Iraq for mental health problems, Winkenwerder said.

See **ASIST** page 13

Training emphasizes linking at-risk individuals with community resources

ASIST from page 12

Intervention model

Three years ago, Swanner convinced Training and Doctrine Command to fund an ASIST workshop. Since then, hundreds of service members have been trained using the Suicide Intervention Model.

The relative simplicity of the Suicide Intervention Model makes it easy for participants to remember should they ever have to apply it.

First, participants learn to notice the subtle signs of someone experiencing suicidal thoughts. Most of these “invitations” come from non-verbal signals such as withdrawal from family and friends, loss of interest in hobbies and extreme behavior changes.

Participants then learn how to approach the suicidal person to try to connect and discern if the person is seriously considering suicide.

Once contact is made, participants learn how to get the suicidal person to talk about his or her problems and open up. “A burden shared between two people lessens it,” Cryer said.

Finally, ASIST students learn how to link the person to other resources, such as a chaplain or counselor (*see box for Stuttgart-area resources*).

“We’re not here to become therapists,” said Stuttgart American Red Cross Team Leader and ASIST instructor Gymmy Harris. “It’s about individuals at risk and finding them help.”

An ongoing effort

Stuttgart’s Suicide and Stress Prevention and Intervention Working Group, a team staffed by agencies within the 6th ASG, plans to hold ASIST training

quarterly.

“We want to make ASIST a regular part of the community and bring in more people,” said 6th ASG Chaplain (Col.) Sherrill Munn.

The training is ideal for “anyone to whom others are drawn to naturally,” Saylor said, identifying non-commissioned officers, supervisors, teachers and family readiness group leaders as potential students.

“Our goal is to create a pool of 500 people who’ve attended,” Saylor added, “a team of individuals who could intervene if they needed to.”

Participant feedback from the first ASIST session was positive.

“It was a wonderful course with passionate mentors who guided the group to discover answers from within. The course opened my eyes to many issues and gave me numerous tools to aid fellow service members,” said Capt. Richard Bower, who works as the safety officer for Headquarters, Marine Forces, Europe.

“The course brought a new perspective to suicide intervention,” said Staff Sgt. Jason Shradnick, the 6th ASG Provost Marshal’s Office operations sergeant.

“[It] made me feel prepared to help an individual thinking about taking his or her life,” Shradnick said.

• *Another ASIST workshop is planned for June in Stuttgart. For workshop details contact Michelle Saylor at 430-4073/civ. 0711-680-4073.*

• *For more information about ASIST visit www.livingworks.net.*

• *For information about suicide prevention and intervention, visit the National Institute of Mental Health Web site at www.nimh.nih.gov or the Center for Disease Control at www.cdc.gov.*

Suicide intervention resources in the Stuttgart area

• **On-post counseling** – The 6th ASG Chaplain’s office offers confidential counseling. Call 430-5000/civ. 0711-680-5000 or visit building 2307 (Washington Square, 4th floor)

• **Off-post counseling** – U.S. identification cardholders may visit an off-post mental health professional up to eight times without a doctor’s referral. For a list of doctors, visit the Tricare office on Patch Barracks (behind the Stuttgart Health Clinic).

• **Army Community Service** – ACS offers a variety of counseling and related services. For details call 430-7176/civ. 0711-680-7176.



main photo courtesy DoD / inset photo by Melanie Casey

[Above] The 554th Military Police Company's Sgt. Krystal Darcey (who was a specialist when this photo was taken) provides security with her MK-19 grenade machine gun outside of Kirkuk, Iraq, Oct. 1.

[Inset] Darcey is congratulated by 6th Area Support Group Commander Col. Gwendolyn Bonéy-Harris during a welcome home ceremony March 10 on Panzer Kaserne.

Deployment intensity fades during gradual reintegration process

Wardawgs from Page 1

Challenges

The Soldiers were fired upon three times, but were never hit by any improvised explosive devices, Akers said.

"Our gunners knew their jobs," he recalled. "There would be explosions 10 minutes before, 10 minutes after, but we went through without getting hit."

Initially, the 20 men and two women were slated to return home Nov. 1, but those plans changed as the end of October approached.

The Soldiers – and their families – only had about a week's notice that they would not be returning home on time.

"That was the most challenging leadership challenge we had," Akers said. "It was a huge letdown, [but] we had to refocus on our mission."

Akers' wife, Tammie said that the hardest thing [during the time the Soldiers were gone] was when the families learned their loved ones wouldn't return as expected.

"You got your hopes up," she said. But, "involvement in the [Family Readiness Group] helped."

The deployment "was the most rewarding and challenging experience I've ever had," Akers added. "It's hard to put into words."

Read about other area Soldiers who have deployed – and about the Army Reserve Soldiers who will be augmenting the area's force protection effort – in the April 6 edition of The Citizen.

Reintegration Roadmap

The 554 MP Company's returning Soldiers went through the U.S. Army, Europe's, reintegration process, a seven-day model that covers issues such as communicating with spouses and children and updating paperwork.

USAREUR's "Reintegration Roadmap" includes the following:

- **Day one** – Personnel accountability; sensitive items and classified materials turned in.
 - **Day two** – Unit-specific reintegration information; briefings regarding communicating with spouses and children; USAREUR safety briefings.
 - **Day three** – Medical screenings, including tuberculosis and blood tests.
 - **Day four** – Review and update emergency data.
 - **Day five** – Security education briefings; continued unit-specific requirements.
 - **Day six** – Obtain Army One Source information, complete Army Research Institute survey.
 - **Day seven** – Submit travel vouchers, report any loss or damage to personal property.
 - **Day eight** – Formal welcome home ceremony.
- Melanie Casey

DeCA changes check policy

Defense Commissary Agency Release

The Defense Commissary Agency is now using a centralized commercial process to handle the collection of returned checks. This change will accomplish the following:

- Shorten the amount of time it takes for the check to be satisfied.
- Eliminate the second payment attempt.
- Automatically deduct the amount from the customer's bank account on military paydays through electronic collection.

For more information call 00800-6541-2398.

Women’s History Month 2004: ‘Inspiring Hope and Possibility’



Courtesy NASA Quest



H.B. Lindsley



Defense Visual Information Center



Alabama Women’s Hall of fame



Petty Officer 2nd Class Davis Rush, USN

Faces from women’s history (clockwise from top left): 1. Dr. Mae C. Jemison, the first woman of color to go into space. 2. Harriet Tubman, a “conductor” on the underground railroad. 3. A U.S. Army nurse comforting a child. 4. 1st Lt. Keri Schubert, the first female Marine selected for naval flight officer duty in the F/A-18D Hornet. 5. Helen Keller, who refused to let blindness and deafness stop her from becoming a world-renowned author and lecturer.

Women’s History Quiz

The following eight women are this year’s Women’s History Month honorees. Can you match each woman with her accomplishments? (Answers below)

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| a. Leslie Marmon Silko | d. Maxine Hong Kingston | g. Edna Campbell |
| b. Vilma Martinez | e. Marian Wright Edelman | h. Sarah Buel |
| c. Dr. Susan B. Love | f. Jill Ker Conway | |

1. A professional basketball player and breast cancer survivor, she travels the country advocating for regular breast exams and inspiring those with cancer to have hope that they, too, can overcome the disease.
2. A civil rights attorney and community activist, she served as president and general counsel of the Mexican-American Legal Defense Fund for nine years.
3. The first female president of Smith College, this educator, historian and writer is respected for her role in the success of women’s education.
4. A writer, educator and peace activist, she uses cultural images and traditions from her Chinese heritage. Her work often combines autobiography and fiction, using dreams, memory, myth and desire to heal and expand the human spirit.
5. A surgeon and author, she is a founder of the breast cancer advocacy movement and a co-founder of the National Breast Cancer Coalition.
6. For almost 40 years, this children’s rights advocate and civil rights activist has worked for quality health care, immunizations, nutritious food and educational opportunities.
7. Her love of storytelling began when she was a child and she listened to her great-grandmother’s tales. Today she is an acclaimed storyteller and award-winning author.
8. A graduate of Harvard Law School, she runs a legal clinic for battered women and is the co-founder and co-director of the National Training Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence.

Answers
1-g, 2-b, 3-f, 4-d, 5-c, 6-e, 7-a, 8-h (source: www.nwhp.org)